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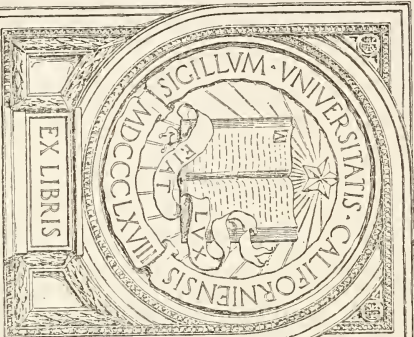
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CALLAO—LIMA

DITTY BOX GUIDE BOOK SERIES

BUREAU OF NAVIGATION
NAVY DEPARTMENT



THE LIMA CATHEDRAL

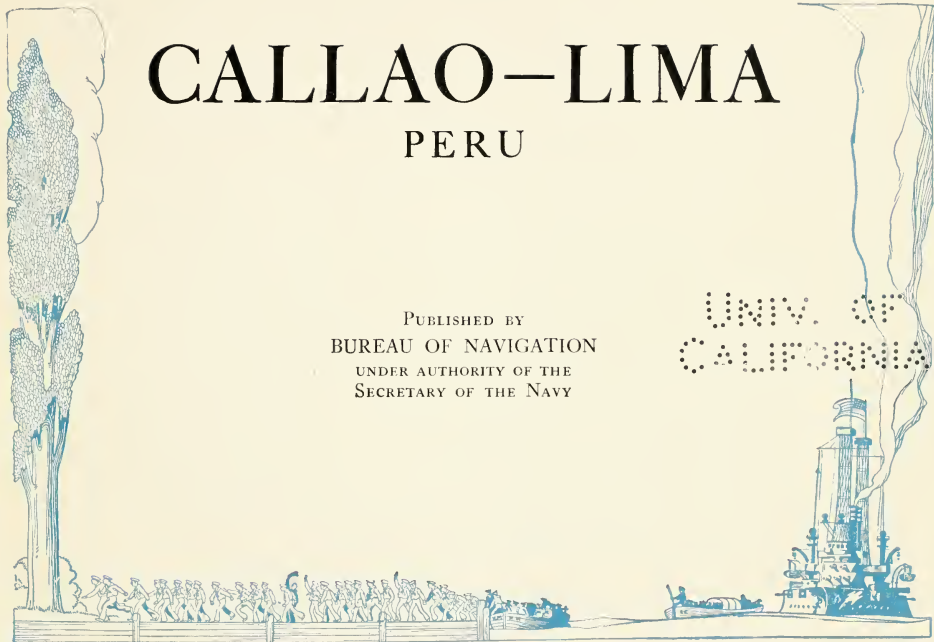


CALLAO—LIMA

PERU

PUBLISHED BY
BUREAU OF NAVIGATION
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SECRETARY OF THE NAVY

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1875

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INDIANS OF PERU
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DETACHMENT OF THE PERUVIAN ARMY

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Foreword



SINCE warships flying the American flag have made the world of waters their cruising grounds and since they carry with them scores of thousands of seagoing Americans, the interest of the Nation in ports, far and near, has necessarily increased in recent years.

In order to furnish valuable information to officers and enlisted men of the Navy, who visit these countries—as well as to other travelers on official business—the Bureau of Navigation is preparing individual guidebooks on the principal ports in all quarters of the globe.

Although every effort has been made to include accurate information on the most important subjects connected with this port, it is realized that some important facts may have been omitted and that certain details may be inaccurate. Any information concerning omissions or inaccuracies, addressed to Guidebook Editor, Bureau of Navigation, will be appreciated. The information will be incorporated in revised editions.

Grateful acknowledgment is made to the National Geographic Society for its suggestions, both as to editorial policy and the interesting details concerning Callao and Lima and environs.

Acknowledgment is also made to Publishers' Photo Service for the following photographs, which are copyrighted.

Introduction



ERUVIAN GOLD—Incas' idols—Pizarro the conqueror—Indian slaves—forgotten cities—Spanish galleons—bronzed buccaneers—the warm breath of romance! Of all the South American countries Peru is probably the most fascinating from the standpoint of history, and one of the most unique, even in the prosaic age of the present. Peru has lost much of her ancient splendor. Very nearly the last vestige of her olden civilization has disappeared before the onset of a new one; but even now, with its unusual industries, its oriental tinge, its desert coast, traditions, and picturesque characters, Peru is fascinating to the wandering stranger.

The traveler knows that Peru is part of South America; yet he finds that it is not wholly of South America. An explanation can not be given here, for no one knows the reason. The wrinkled hags of the uplands will tell the stranger that the Indians who crept and moaned and died under the Spanish yoke have come back to haunt the land; others will say that the Incas' ghosts have returned to guard their stores of hidden gold; that their presence is responsible for the feeling of oppression experienced at times by the traveler during his sojourn in Peru. But such superstitious mumblings, such old wives' tales, can be laughed away as pure inventions, as products of distorted imaginations; but, nevertheless, there is mystery and a "feeling in the air" along the Peruvian coast and in the mountain lands.

Perhaps the suggestion of the unreal, of the fantastic, which grips the foreigner in Peru, is due to the oriental dress of some of its people, its out-of-place Arabian horses of pure strain. Perhaps it is the white gleam of the Andes against the purple and red horizon toward the east; possibly it is only the uncanny silence which surrounds the mountains, and is broken on the sea-shore only by the sw-i-i-s-h of the waves against the coast and the shrill whistling of white-breasted cormorants and Peruvian gannets on the cliffs. It is possible, too, that the feeling is brought on by the weird and almost unbelievable tales one hears of the ancient sorrow of Peru. At any rate the feeling is there, no matter how or whence it came. Superstitious travelers have been known to place credence in the old hags' tales of the ghosts of the Incas and the wraiths of Indian slaves bent double under the yoke; but the writer takes it for granted that the reader is not superstitious, and so laughs with him at the foolish tales of fleshless men come back to guard their hidden gold. Surely the gold can do them no good at this late age, and the only result would be to plague innocent natives and cause their hair to rise on their heads and the skin to creep on their shivering backs.

Peru is a land of contrasts, the most noticeable of which is the coldness of the ocean waves that dash against tropical shores. Other contrasts are the watering of tropical plants by melted snows, deserts and fertile valleys, and the snow-clad Andes towering over tropical forests. Another contrast along the coast is the lack of moisture, which might render Peru unfit for human habitation were it not for rainfall in the interior. This contrast of cold water and warm shores is caused by a current of cold water—the Hum-

boldt current, which flows along the coast of South America from regions near the Antarctic to the Equator. The absence of moisture on the coast is caused by the expansion of the atmosphere, which makes for dryness. We know that before it can rain a moisture-filled atmosphere must contract—the “sponge” must be squeezed. The atmosphere along the Peruvian coast expands rather than contracts, under the influence of the cold winds from the Humboldt current blowing on shores warmed by the hot sun. And, resultantly, it does not rain on the coast lands of Peru.

Perhaps these contrasts, all of them seemingly unnatural to the casual observer, have something to do with the strangeness, to him, of the Republic of Peru. They heighten the effect of the unusual and mysterious, and are dispelled only when he sits down to consider causes and effects. But despite his reasoning the traveler finds that something of his first impressions still cling to him. He still has visions of the grotesque, the fantastic, the unnatural, when he travels through Peru.

Callao is the chief seaport in the 1,200 miles of Peruvian coast, extending from Chile on the south to Ecuador on the north. Seven miles inland from Callao is Lima, capital and principal city of the Republic. The following chapters will deal with both the seaport and the capital, and give something of the very interesting history of Peru and the manners and customs of the “Land of the Llamas.”

FALL OF THE INCAS



ALF a thousand years ago, when the white man in Europe was so occupied with the Mohammedan problem and other affairs that he had little time to look toward the unexplored regions beyond the

Atlantic, Peru was ruled by the Incas, a tribe of warriors, who kept the weaker peoples of the country in subjection. Peru prospered under the Incas. The land was tilled, the llama domesticated, and the arts and professions were encouraged. Gold and silver mines were worked for their precious contents. Treasure was placed in the graves of the Incas, in their temples, palaces, and public buildings. It was gold that brought about the fall of the Incas.

Pizarro, the Spaniard, at the head of a small band of his countrymen, invaded Peru in 1531. He found the country in arms, not to repel the invasion, but to settle a quarrel between the sons of Huayna Capac, greatest of the Incas. In



Lima Street, Callao

an effort to divide the empire inherited from their father, the two sons, Huascar and Atahualpa, came to blows. Huascar had just been captured by his brother, when Pizarro, with his eight score and four men and two falconets (or cannon), marched into the country. Followed months of war, in which the Incas were defeated and the country conquered by



the gold-thirsty followers of Pizarro. Searching for gold in Peru as they had searched for gold in Panama, the foreigners slaughtered natives, pillaged cities, and laid waste the fertile countryside. The invaders were not content with the gold and silver they found in temples and cemeteries; they enslaved the Indians and sent them into the mines, where they exchanged their lives for gold with which to load the treasure ships.

THE ANCIENT CURSE



PIZARRO was assassinated by his enemies. A new rule was inaugurated by the conquerors. They became more merciful in their treatment of the natives, who, for a time, were in danger of extermination. Later a law was passed at the request of Spanish churchmen, which, by releasing the Indians from slavery, reflected credit on the Spanish Government. But the brief years in which the Indians of Peru had been held in slavery were so

filled with cruelty, torture, and pain for the poor victims that even now, four hundred years later, their descendants stand in awe of the white man. The terror in which the Indians held the conquerors must have been abject, to stamp its mark on their children for so many generations. On the road the Indian will salute the white man with respect; his children will look on the white man with awe; the Indian who is hired to run an errand will accept as a rule whatever is given him. If he objects to the smallness of the fee, the white man has only to shout "Begone!" and the poor Indian, with his terror of the white man, will slink away. His very humility makes him an object of pity and should single him out for a certain amount of consideration. Of course this is not true of some Indians, especially those with a spoonful of white blood in their veins. But it is true of a great many of them. The ragged fellow who touches his hat and lowers his eyes when a white man passes by was robbed of his courage, even before he was born. He is burdened and dragged down by a hereditary fear. And this fear



may have something to do with the Peruvian tales of the ghosts of Indian slaves, who are said to haunt the graves of the foreigners whom they carried, as they died, in the black tunnels of the gold and silver mines of Peru.

There were uprisings among the colonies in South America during the latter part of the eighteenth century and the early years of the nineteenth century; but Peru took no part in these earlier struggles. It was the last of the colonies to declare its independence, which was achieved with the help of Bolivar, General San Martin, and a number of English volunteers. The war of independence ended in 1826, when the Spaniards abandoned Callao.

In 1880, during a war in which Peru, Chile, Bolivia, and Ecuador banded together against their former rulers, Callao was bombarded by a Spanish fleet. The war was ended successfully for the allies; but in the resulting negotiations Peru and Bolivia became allied in a war against Chile. Callao was again bombarded, this time by the Chileans, who captured the seaport in 1881. Peru regained Callao

by provision of the treaty of peace in 1883, and since that time Peru has been free to progress and grow with other South American Republics. A number of revolutions and unfortunate boundary disputes have punctuated the history of Peru during the past forty or fifty years, but they have not greatly detracted from the growth or prosperity of the country.

A JAUNT TO CALLAO



WHEN the ship on which the traveler is sailing plows a furrow through the waters of the Pacific Ocean, down the west coast of South America, on its voyage to Peru, he usually experiences fair weather until the ship proceeds four or five hundred miles below the Isthmus of Panama. From there until the ship reaches Callao, and farther on down the coast, to and around Cape Horn or the Straits of Magellan, the traveler feels the temperature dropping; warm clothing is





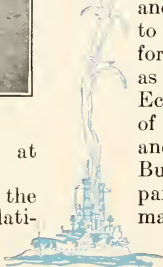
Cotton on the Docks at Callao

comfortable; he considers blankets at night a blessing.

Visions of the warmth and heat of the Southern Pacific Ocean, in the same lati-

tude in which, farther to the west, the South Sea Islanders get along with very little clothing or none at all, are dispelled and shattered. The voyageur is disappointed. He expects smiling skies and the warm caress of a flower-scented wind. Instead he finds cold, dour winds, rain, fog as thick as smoke, and altogether disagreeable weather.

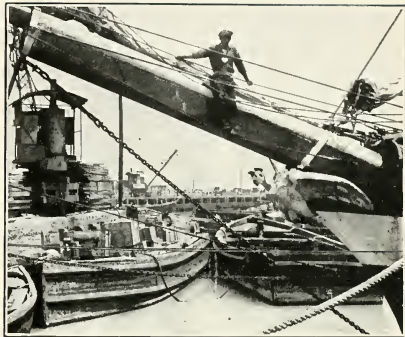
It is the fault, of course, of the unpleasant Humboldt current, which affects the western coast of South America fully as much as the Gulf Stream affects the climate of western Europe. The coldness of the climate along the coast is not the only prank played by nature in this region. Along the shores of Colombia and Ecuador, if the ship goes close enough to land, the traveler glimpses abundant forest lands not so far inland; but as soon as he reaches the boundary of Peru and Ecuador he is sailing along a coast devoid of rain, and, therefore, devoid of forests and almost innocent of other plant life. But in forming a desert out of the western parts of Peru, the Humboldt current has made possible the accumulation of guano,



which has put some money into the Peruvian treasury and enriched, also, private companies engaged in digging the guano for use as fertilizer in foreign countries whose soil has become impoverished after bearing crops for hundreds of years. The guano deposits of Peru will be discussed more fully in a succeeding chapter.

The Peruvian coast is sown, here and there, with groups of barren islands, which furnish a rather unsatisfactory sort of contrast with the desert plateau lying inert and lifeless behind them. There is nothing about the coast at this point to arouse enthusiasm or interest. It is an altogether dreary land, and the traveler eagerly longs for a sight of Callao and Lima and the valleys and other fertile regions in the inland districts of the Republic of Peru.

Callao Point, a shingle bank extending out toward the island of San Lorenzo, marks the entrance to the bay and harbor of Callao. The beach of La Mar Brava—the boisterous sea—reaches from Callao Point to Miraflores, which is down the coast, farther south. La Mar Brava derives



In the Harbor

its name from the surf which beats constantly against the shore, making it impossible for the small boats to land there during a greater part of the year. A number of hills, close to the sea, form a cape, sloping downward as it reaches Callao Point. The bay is formed by the cliffs and the island of San Lorenzo, whose shores rise abruptly from the water's edge, as if seeking to escape the eternal



Senate Chamber, Lima

pitiless pounding of the surf. An old lighthouse stands on the island. The

Twenty-Four

anchorage is reached by a channel proceeding round the northern extreme of San Lorenzo.

SAN FELIPE CASTLE



ALLAO, a prosperous port of some 30,000 inhabitants, is interested mainly in the transshipment of the exports and imports which come to the port from the interior of Peru and from the merchant vessels which anchor in the harbor. The population, of course, is preponderantly Peruvian, but there are many Indians, some of them of mixed blood and others all Indian. And there are a great many Japanese and Chinese, a few Americans and British and other Europeans.

The Customhouse stands at the end of the mole. Steps on the south end provide a landing place for men-of-war. In accordance with the port regulations boats are not permitted to lie at the steps, but must be taken out to buoys clear of the landing place. While in the harbor, during the months of March and April, ships



usually are afflicted with an unpleasant odor, commonly called "The Painter." It comes from a mud-colored slime rising from the sand, and believed by some authorities to be the remains of innumerable quantities of small dead fish brought in by the tide. Others declare it to be of volcanic origin. No matter where it comes from, the slime gives forth a most nauseating smell, comparing favorably with poison gas and other unpleasant mixtures which acquired notoriety in the World War.

Although the types of natives in Callao furnish a most interesting study for the student of human nature, the buildings are not featured by any particularly striking features. The majority of travelers landing in Callao do not remain there long, but hurry on to Lima, which, more pleasing to the eye, affords more entertainment and recreation for the visitor than Callao. However, since there is such a thing as not being able to go to Lima, the principal sights of Callao, some of which are more than ordinarily picturesque, will be listed for the benefit of the reader in this chapter.

Callao, like Cæsar's Gaul, is divided into three parts. The first settlement, de-



Courtyard of a Residence

stroyed by an earthquake and tidal wave nearly two hundred years ago, lies north of modern Callao. The present city is composed of two districts, one the older and



San Augustine Monastery

the other the comparatively modern section. Old Callao, a mixture of narrow, winding streets and quaint (and insubstantial) old houses, rests in the center of the city; surrounding it is new Callao with broad streets and avenues, and better dwellings than those of old Callao.

The most romantic spot in Callao is the Castle of San Felipe, from whose tower the flag of Spain last floated on continental

America. After exercising complete control over a great part of South America and much of North America, for a period of centuries, the Spanish possessions on the continent, north and south, were reduced to the one small castle, San Felipe, whose walls were to toss back the echoes of the bugle notes sounding "taps" for the end of Spanish rule on the mainland, when the garrison evacuated the castle during the revolution in which Peru gained her freedom. The castle, with its stained gray walls, is drab with the drabness of old, old buildings by the sea. It is even more lifeless in appearance than near-by buildings. But around its massive walls there lingers some of the same sort of romance which clings to castles wherever they are; whether they be castles in Spain, or in Italy, or on the Rhine, or in Old England. They whisper a message from the dead into the ears of the living, and he who pauses to listen gleams more out of a visit to the unkempt, ramshackled old stone piles than he who looks at them and sees them as they are, instead of looking at them and seeing them for what they were in the days of long ago. Such is the



castle of San Felipe, where the Spanish troops made their last stand in Peru.

Callao enjoys fair weather at all seasons of the year. The heat is almost never oppressive. Late in the morning and early in the afternoon a sea breeze sweeps over the city, cooling brows which may have become fevered by the morning's exertions. The nights are fairly cool, sometimes even cold. A touch of dampness hangs over the city in the early hours of the morning. Clouds of mist often swirl in from the ocean. There are sometimes periods of fog in Callao during December and March; then the city is wrapped in a gray, wet cloak which adds to the suspicion of the mysterious and fantastic, always present, especially in the older districts and in the winding streets and alleys of Callao.

Travelers may obtain information from the American consul general in Callao. Other diplomatic representatives in Callao are as follows: Consul generals of Chile, Sweden, and Denmark; consuls of Great Britain and Germany; and vice-consuls of France, Belgium, Argentina, Uruguay, Italy, and Mexico.

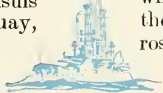
CITY OF THE KINGS



LIMA, capital of Peru, stands on the banks of the Rimac River, about seven miles from Callao, from which port it can be reached by electric or steam railroad. The city rests in a wide valley, flanked by mountains,

whose peaks tower over the city toward the north. The land around the city is part of the coastal plain, bare and brown, with lack of rain, except in some spots where irrigation has made possible the growth of oases in the middle of the barren land.

Lima was given by Pizarro the poetic name "City of the Kings." The conqueror of Peru, besides being a soldier, was evidently a romantic soul, as were most of his fellow soldiers. They are said to have alternated their forays in search of Indian gold with periods of moonstruck melancholia. Then they sang tender love songs and sighed beneath the balconies where sat their dark-eyed lady loves. And their lady loves, in turn, would hold red roses between their pearly teeth, cast





Old Franciscan Church

mournful glances at their romantic lovers, at the same time scowling at their Dueñas. (Dueña is Spanish for chaperon.) Yes,

Twenty-Eight


they had spitfire tempers, had these lady loves of old. They shattered the hearts of many a brave don, who, but a short time before, perhaps, had broken his sword on an Indian skull. Shattered hearts and broken swords—what a phrase to conjure with. Sir Walter Scott or Fenimore Cooper could have written a novel around it, but we can only pass it by. Pizarro's poetic name, "City of the Kings," was generally applied to Lima for several years; but it finally fell into disuse and was succeeded by the present name of the city—Lima—a derivative of Rimac, the river which flows through the city.

Lima has a population of some 150,000 persons. It is the largest and most prosperous city of Peru, the combined heart and brain of the Republic. Its streets are narrow, its houses seldom more than two stories in height, built frequently with reeds plastered over with mud. The practice of building houses with reeds and mud is not followed by choice, but rather by necessity, since frequent earthquakes in Lima make very nearly impracticable any house of solid structure. In the event of an earthquake, the remains of the frail



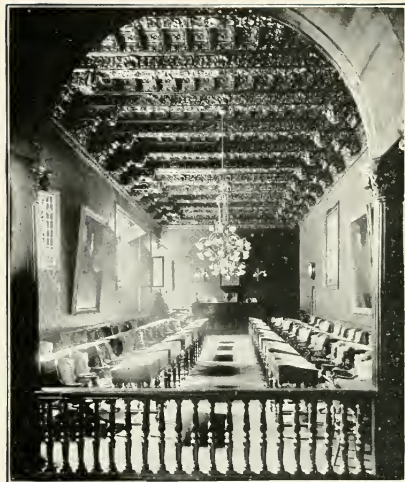
houses can easily be cleared away, and new ones of a similar type can be constructed with less expense than would be incurred in the building or rebuilding of a house of stone, brick, or wood.

THE HEART OF LIMA



S LIMA is the heart of Peru, so the Plaza de Armas is the heart of Lima. In nearly every Spanish-speaking city or town the plaza or the square is the center of interest for the populace. Public celebrations are held in the square; the people promenade there of an evening and on holidays. Lima could no more get along without its Plaza de Armas than Boston could get along without its Commons, or Paris without its Champs Elysées, or Washington without its Potomac Park. The Plaza de Armas is a fixture, a tradition, in the Peruvian capital. Around the Plaza are a number of buildings whose past is filled with associations with the history of Peru.

One of the most prominent of these structures, the Cathedral, contains what is



Senate Building

said to be the mummified body of Pizarro. Aside from its interest as a resting place of the Spanish adventurer, the Cathedral, with its Moorish façade and its towers, its small

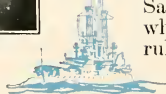


The Plaza

shrines and choir stalls, its air of quiet, ecclesiastical dignity, is attractive in itself. The bones of Pizarro are contained in a glass case, reposing in one of the several shrines inside the Cathedral. It was Pizarro who founded the Cathedral in 1540, in one of those strangely pious moods which came at intervals in his orgies of bloodshed and looting. The original cathedral, crumbling in the passage of years, has been largely rebuilt by succeeding generations of Peruvians.

A slab of marble in the pavement of the arcade, which fronts the Government buildings on the opposite corner of the Plaza de Armas, points out the spot where Pizarro was assassinated by his enemies. Tradition says that Pizarro, as he lay on the ground in a bed of his own blood, dipped his fingers in the arterial liquid and made a crimson sign of the cross "as his life fled up his throat." At the moment of his death, as during his life, he seemed to be fascinated by the sight of blood.

From the gallery of the municipal building, also on the Plaza de Armas, General San Martin shouted forth the message which indicated the passing of Spanish rule in Peru. An old chapel on the Plaza



is the only remaining part of the viceregal palace, whose Moorish decorations, hundreds of years ago, were the pride of Lima. There are other squares in Lima besides the Plaza de Armas; there are other churches in the Peruvian capital besides the Cathedral. The Plaza de Acho, north of the Rimac River, contains the bull ring where the national sport of Spain is indulged in by Peruvian matadors. The Plaza de Bolivar, containing a statue of Bolivar, the patriot, is a third square in Lima. There are several spacious promenades, shaded by large trees and ornamented with statues of Peruvian generals and statesmen.

HOTELS AND THEATERS



LIMA'S principal hotels and theaters, typically South American, are listed as follows: Hotel Maury, Calle Bodegones 99, 30 suites in main building and 30 suites in annex—

rates for room and meals \$3 a day and up; Hotel Francia, Inglaterra and Plaza de Armas, 100 rooms; Gran Hotel, Calle Melchormalo, 65 rooms—



National University

rates usually \$1 to \$3.50 for rooms without meals; with meals, \$3 to \$5 a day.



A Busy Street

Theaters: Teatro Chino, Cangallo 37; Teatro Olimpo, Ica. (C); Teatro Politeama, Lampa 250; Teatro Municipal, Place del

Thirty-Two

Teatro; Empresa del Cinema Teatro; Empresa Internacional Cinematografica; also the new Forero Theater. Americans in Lima have a very short name for "cinematográfica"—it is "movie."

MOORS AND INDIANS



LIMA is disappointing to many travelers who proceed to the city with the conviction that they are about to see something entirely wondrous and beautiful and fascinating. But it is not Lima's fault; rather it is the traveler's. The proverbial "distance lends enchantment" is true of Lima, just as it is of Athens, of Rome, of London, of Washington, of any city. Although Lima is disappointing to the traveler who expects too much, it is, in the same breath, entirely satisfactory to the traveler who goes to Lima without first building romantic, ephemeral, and impossible air castles of what he hopes to see in the city. The visitor in Lima must expect to view just as much sordidness and squalor



and as much of the commonplace as he sees in any other city at home or abroad. He must expect to be bothered by the heat—it may cause him to swear feelingly; and if he is not tortured by the heat he very likely will be plagued by the cold, damp air, the fogs, and the low, thick clouds which hang at times over the Peruvian capital. He must expect to see a certain monotony about most of the buildings, and he should not be surprised if he arrives in the midst of a celebration or political campaign of some sort, for they are frequently happening in Lima. Despite all these disadvantages (except the last named, which might be looked upon as an advantage by the adventurer), Lima has its color—great red, and green, and purple splashes of it; Lima has personality—and that, we claim, is more than can be said for many cities; and Lima has a variety of races, observation of which on the plazas, the promenades, or in the outlying districts, should more than make up for any beauty of architecture the modern city may lack.

The Indians of Lima are more picturesque than any of the other Limeños; most



A Small Store

of them have not yet reached that stage of civilization which renders men and races uninteresting; they have enough of the



Balconies

primitive about them, both as regards manners and dress, to attract and hold the attention of the traveler who wanders into Lima. Reddish-brown in color, the Peru-

vian Indians seem to the guileless traveler to have a constant blush on his face; and the guileless traveler usually ascribes what he thinks is a blush to the lack of clothing, and, therefore, according to our standards, the lack of modesty among the Indian folk. It may be said, however, that such impressions are erroneous. When he is in town the Indian usually dresses up, and he is still reddish-brown in color. The guileless traveler, surprised at the fact, makes inquiries and finds that the reddish-brown in the face of the Indian is not the mark of a blush at all—it is a very natural color.

When the Peruvian Indian puts on his holiday clothing he is in a position to give pointers to strollers in Piccadilly or on Broadway—Beau Brummel would flee his presence in despair; the peacock would drag his bronze and green tail in the dust. Nearly all Indian women in Peru wear the national poncho or cloak; blue, green, red, yellow, violet, and salmon colored petticoats; and wide brimmed hats with gilt bands. Sometimes they wear shoes, but frequently they manage to survive without them. Around their necks the



women wear long strings of beads. Some of them wear earrings and silver jewelry, and then consider their dress to be complete. The Indian men wear ponchos, too; their trousers are of vivid hue, their hats smaller and closer fitting than the women's. Under their hats they wear tight-fitting caps, resembling skull caps, with flaps covering the ears. The caps are often a bright, shrieking red in color, and the hats are usually white; so the reader can visualize the startling and colorful effect even before he sees it. Some Indians have adopted the sombre clerical garb of the modern civilized male, especially those Indians who live in the cities; but there are enough of the Indians who retain the old style of dress to brighten the landscape wherever they go in Lima or Callao. There are many Negroes in Peru; and many Zambos, or men and women of mixed Indian and Negro blood; and, too, Mestizos, or half-breeds of mixed white and Indian ancestry. The aristocracy of Lima and Callao is composed mostly of families of Castilian ancestry, who have kept their veins clear of Indian and Negro blood since the time



The Paseo Colon

of the conquistadores. Although in all probability a very small portion of the population of Peru has Moorish blood in its veins, the influence of the ancient invaders of Spain is seen in the style of architecture which predominates in the more substantial buildings of Lima.



The National University

It has already been noted that the façade of the Cathedral is typically Moorish in appearance; the same is true of parts of many of the churches and some of the public buildings, especially the old

Thirty-Six

hall of the Inquisition, where the Peruvian Senate now helps to make the laws of the Republic. Possibly the oriental appearance of some of the structures in a city far from the Orient has something to do with the impression of weirdness, of the unreal, which enshrouds the stranger as he walks through the plazas or strolls or rides on the promenades of Lima.

THE DESERT COAST

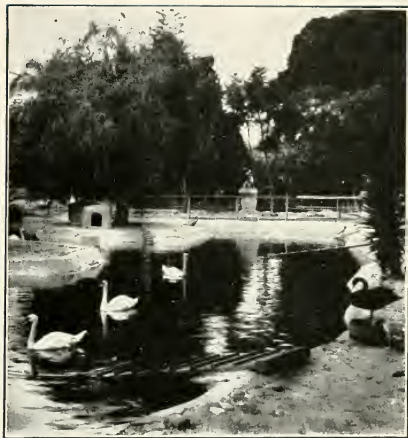


ONE of the anomalies of Peru is that its desert coast—which produces very little plant or vegetable life—furnishes the means whereby crops can be made to grow in the hitherto impoverished soil of other countries, and, too, in the interior of the Republic itself. The “means” is guano, deposited on the islands and cliffs along the shores of Peru by succeeding generations of sea fowl, who live in such vast numbers along the coast that in passing overhead they sometimes “darken the sun,” as did the passenger pigeons of North America. The



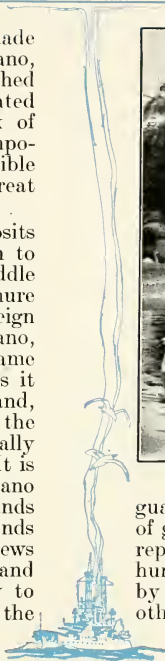
absence of rainfall on the coast has made possible the accumulation of the guano, which otherwise would have been washed away almost as soon as it accumulated on the islands and cliffs. The lack of moisture in the air, preventing decomposition of the guano, makes it possible for people to gather it without a great deal of discomfort.

The importance of the guano deposits along the Peruvian coast was known to the Incas, but it was not until the middle of the last century that its value as manure was realized and appreciated by foreign nations. Soon the demand for guano, especially in European countries, became so great that the supply, immense as it was, could not keep up with the demand, and in the ensuing fifty or sixty years the Peruvian guano beds were practically stripped of their valuable deposits. It is estimated that ten million tons of guano were taken from one group of islands between 1850 and 1870. The islands were surrounded by ships, whose crews would shovel the guano into bags and bins, and sail away to market, only to return for another cargo as soon as the



The Zoo

guano was unloaded at port. The beds of guano were scores of feet thick. They represented an accumulation of tens and hundreds of thousands of years' deposits by the gannets, cormorants, penguins, and other sea birds living along the coast.



The despoilers of the beds not only carried away the guano, but they also killed and drove away many of the birds.

In 1908 the Peruvian Government, realizing the mistake being made in permitting the wholesale despoliation of the guano beds, closed the Chincha Islands, principal depositories, for a period of years. In 1910 extraction of guano was permitted on one of the small islands in the group—and 22,000 tons of fertilizer, representing two years' accumulation, were removed and sold. A policy of conservation similar to that observed by our country in the national forest areas is now being followed, and the wisdom of the Government in adopting such a policy has been demonstrated time and again. To give some idea of the numbers of guano-depositing birds on the coast of Peru it is only necessary to visit one of the islands. Tens of thousands of birds and almost as many nests are crowded together in small areas. For example, nearly a million cormorants have been seen grouped together at one time on one of the Chincha Islands. The Ballestas and Chincha

Thirty-Eight

Islands are occupied largely by the cormorants, the Lobos Islands by the pelicans, the Santa Rosas group by the small terns, and San Gallan by the little petrels. These are but a few of the guano islands scattered up and down the coast of Peru.

TALES OF OLD PERU



ANY tales of old Peru are still related by the people of the country. Some of the tales have become traditions; some deal with political events; some tell of the adventures of the conquistadores and the Incas; others are just stories of love, and life, and death. All of them are fascinating, whether the person who hears them be of either a romantic or realistic turn of mind. With the hope that a summary of a few of the tales of old Peru will help the reader to absorb some of the atmosphere of this ancient country, some of the tales, in condensed form, will be related in the present and last chapter. The first one, vouched for by James Bryce, author of



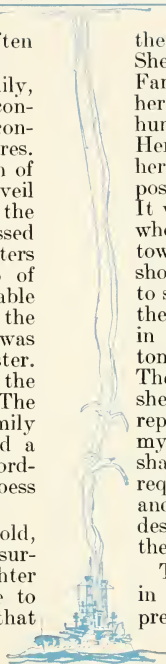
"The American Commonwealth," is often told in Peru.

Many years ago a Peruvian family, with wealth inherited from its conquistadore ancestors, founded the convent of Nuestra Senora de los Dolores. It was decided that one of the women of the family should always take the veil and devote her life to serving as the abbess of the convent. Years passed and the convent prospered, its sisters devoting themselves to the worship of God and the carrying out of charitable works among the poor. Finally the family which founded the convent was reduced to two brothers and a sister. The older brother was a layman, the younger a bishop of the church. The older brother was a widower; his family consisted of two children, a son and a daughter. The sister was, in accordance with the family custom, the abbess of the convent.

Now the abbess was growing old, and fearing that she would not long survive it was decided that the daughter should enter the convent to prepare to succeed her aunt. The girl believed that

the religious life was not her vocation. She did not wish to enter the convent. Family custom decreed, however, that her personal inclination could not be humored, and so she entered the convent. Her aunt, the abbess, sympathized with her, made the girl's duties as light as possible. In time, the abbess fell ill. It was suggested that a Scotch physician who had but recently moved to the town in which the convent was located should be consulted. The abbess refused to see the doctor, and it was decided that the niece, closely veiled, should meet him in an anteroom and describe the symptoms, so that remedies could be suggested. The physician asked the niece whether she could count the pulse. "No," she replied timidly. "Put your fingers on my wrist," said the physician, "and I shall teach you how." The niece did as requested, left to count the abbess' pulse, and then returned to the doctor with the desired information. He decided that the abbess was suffering from cancer.

The doctor continued to meet the niece in the anteroom of the convent—he to prescribe remedies, she to tell him of





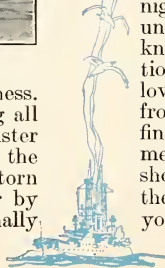
Market Street

the progress of the patient's illness. And then (as we have been expecting all along) the doctor and the young sister fell in love. He urged her to flee the convent, to marry him. She was torn between the duty imposed upon her by her vows and her love of the man. Finally,

Forty

she consented to go with him. The doctor brought a skeleton from the hospital. With the help of the laundress, whom he had enlisted in his cause, the skeleton was taken to the girl's cell in a laundry basket. The young sister placed the skeleton in her bed, set fire to the blankets, and in the resulting confusion, escaped from the convent. The charred bones of the skeleton were mistaken for the remains of her own body, and she was mourned as dead.

The doctor begged the girl to go with him to the coast, where they could be married without being detected by their friends. She first insisted on obtaining the forgiveness of her relatives, and when night fell she crept into the palace of her uncle, the bishop, threw herself on her knees before him, and begged for protection. When she told him the story of her love the bishop attempted to cast her from him. But she still clung to him, and finally he listened. Then, "Wait a moment," he said, and left the room. Very shortly he returned with a bag containing the family jewels—emeralds. "Fly with your lover," he said. The man and the



girl escaped to the coast and boarded an English frigate, where they were married by the chaplain. They fled to England, where, years after, they were found by the girl's brother, to whom the bishop had revealed the secret. The girl was finally forgiven by others in her family beside the bishop, and her descendants, accepted by their Peruvian kinsfolk, are said to be now living in Peru, and they still possess the family jewels which the girl carried with her on her flight to the coast.

Another tale gives the reader some idea of the monstrous cruelty inflicted by foreigners on the natives during the invasion of Peru. One of the last of the Incas, a young man, Tupac Amaru by name, was imprisoned by a foreign governor and in the course of time was condemned to death. The day of execution arrived. As the youth knelt, with his head on the block and the executioner lifted his sword, a cry of horror arose from the assembled crowd of Indians. So unexpected was the sound, so spontaneous, so pitiful, that the executioner put down his sword. A number of priests, their hearts filled with pity for the youth,



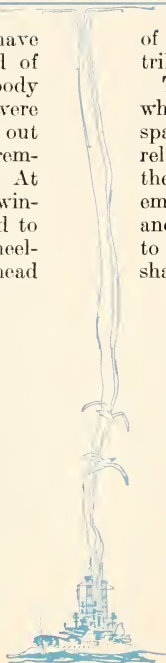
An Old Bell Tower

went immediately to the governor and asked for mercy. But the governor was

unswerving in his determination to have the sentence carried out. The head of Tupac Amaru was struck from his body and placed on a pike, so that all who were there could see the punishment meted out to those who dared question his supremacy in Peru. The hours passed. At midnight someone, looking from a window near the scaffold, was astonished to see a crowd of thousands of Indians kneeling around the pike which held the head

of Tupac Amaru. They were paying tribute to one of the last of the Incas.

There are many other tales of old Peru which might be told in these pages, but space does not permit. However, those related in the preceding paragraphs give the reader a glimpse of ancient days in the empire of the Incas and land of the llamas and the conquistadores. They may help to liven his interest in this land overshadowed by the eternal Andes.



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MEMORANDUM

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